Burial Ceremonies in Rome

When a person died, he would be washed and laid out on a couch, dressed in his finest clothes and crowned, if he had earned one in life. A coin would be placed on his mouth, under the tongue, or on the eyes so he could pay the ferryman Charon to row him to the land of the dead. After being laid out for 8 days, he would be taken out for burial. Funerals could be expensive, so poor but not indigent Romans, including slaves, contributed to a burial society which guaranteed proper burial in columbaria, which resembled dovecotes and allowed many to be buried together in a small space, rather than dumping in pits where their remains would rot.

